



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**Patent and Trademark Office**

Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/218,085	12/22/98	WALKER	J WD2-98-038

022927  
WALKER DIGITAL  
FIVE HIGH RIDGE PARK  
STAMFORD CT 06905

TM02/1117

EXAMINER

WASYLCHAK, S

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2165

DATE MAILED: 11/17/00

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/218085

Applicant(s)

WALKER et al

Examiner

WASYLCHAK

Group Art Unit

2165

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

## Period for Response

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a response be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for response specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a response within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for response is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to respond within the set or extended period for response will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

## Status

- ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ This action is **FINAL**.
- ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- ☒ Claim(s) 1-51 is/are pending in the application.
- Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- ☒ Claim(s) 1-51 is/are rejected.
- ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- ☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.
- ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.
- ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
  - ☐ All ☐ Some\* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 1.7.2(a)).

\*Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_

## Attachment(s)

- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413
- ☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Office Action Summary

### DETAILED ACTION

1. Examined claims 1- 51

#### *Specification*

2. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. The title is too generic. "Product identity concealment" exists in every independent claim; wording to that effect should be incorporated in the title. MPEP 606.01.

#### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

4. Claims 2-9, 14, 15, 20-24, 29, 35-39, 44 and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being unpatentable over Picioccio et al (US 5,997,236).

CI 2, Picioccio discloses receiving the monetary value from the consumer. /

Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 3, L 37-50; col 4, 43-47

CI 3, Picioccio discloses that the step of receiving the monetary value includes receiving a credit card account identifier. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1, 2 and col 3, L 37-50; col 4, 43-47

CI 4, Picioccio discloses that the step of receiving the monetary value includes receiving a smart card identifier. / refer to reasoning directly above

CI 5, Picioccio discloses that the step of receiving the monetary value includes receiving an electronic representation of currency. / refer to reasoning directly above

CI 6, Picioccio discloses that the database includes category data for each of the plurality of products, and the step of selecting is further based on the category data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 9, L 30-36

CI 7, Picioccio discloses receiving a category selection from the consumer. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1, 6 and col 9, L 24-29

CI 8, Picioccio discloses the step of selecting a product includes selecting a combination of products. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 2, L 26-37

CI 9, Picioccio discloses that the step of maintaining includes determining minimum acceptable price data based on sales activity. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 9, L 56-57

CI 14, Picioccio discloses that the database includes profitability data for each of the plurality of products and the step of selecting is further based on the profitability data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 9, L 56-67

CI 15, Picioccio discloses that the database includes demand data for each of the plurality of products and the step of selecting is further based on the demand data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 9, L 56-67

CI 20, Picioccio discloses the processor is operative with the program in the memory to determine the monetary value received from the consumer. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and again in Picioccio: col 5, L 20-26

CI 21, Picioccio discloses that the database includes category data for each of the plurality of products and the step of selecting is based on the category data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19, 20 and refer to reasoning under claim 6

CI 22, Picioccio discloses the processor is operative with the program in the memory to receive a category selection from the consumer. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 7

CI 23, Picioccio discloses the processor is operative with the program in the memory to select a combination of products. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 8

CI 24, Picioccio discloses the processor is operative with the program in the memory to determine minimum acceptable price data based on sales activity. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 9

CI 29, Picioccio discloses the database includes profitability data for each of the plurality of products and the processor is further operative with the program in the memory to select the product based on the profitability data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 14

CI 35, Picioccio discloses comprising the means for receiving the monetary value from the consumer. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 5

CI 36, Picioccio discloses the database includes category data for each of the plurality of products and the means for selecting is further based on the category data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 6

CI 37, Picioccio discloses the comprising means for receiving a category selection from the consumer. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 7

CI 38, Picioccio discloses the means for selecting a product includes means for selecting a combination of products. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 8

CI 39, Picioccio discloses the means for maintaining includes means for determining minimum acceptable price data based on sales activity. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 9

CI 44, Picioccio discloses that the database further includes profitability data for each of the plurality of products and the means for selecting operates based on the profitability data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 14

CI 45, Picioccio discloses that the database includes demand data for each of the plurality of products and the means for selecting operates based on the demand data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 15

Art Unit: 2165

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1, 10-13, 16-19, 25-28, 30-34, 40-43, and 46-51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Picioccio et al (US 5,997,236).

CI 1, Picioccio discloses a method for selling a product from a vending machine, the product identity being concealed at the time of offer, the method comprising:

a. maintaining a database of product data, including normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products; / col 9, L 1-4, 56-61. Picioccio does not explicitly teach normal price data or minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products. However, official notice is taken that both normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products is old and well known in the retail and microeconomic arts. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to use such data to insure that the breakeven point is met so that the vending machine is not operating at a loss.

b. identifying a monetary value available for purchasing a product; / col 9, L 19-29

c. selecting a product from among the plurality of products based on the monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data; / col 1, L 24-27. Picioccio does not teach a minimum acceptable price. However, official notice is taken that minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products is old and well known

Art Unit: 2165

in the retail and microeconomic arts. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to use such data to insure that the breakeven point is met so that the vending machine is not operating at a loss.

d. outputting via an output device an offer of the product to a consumer; / col 9, L 52-54

e. determining whether the consumer accepts the offer; and / col 9, L 52-54

f. dispensing the product if the consumer accepts the product, thereby revealing the identity of the product to the consumer. / col 9, L 52-56

CI 10, Picioccio discloses that the step of identifying includes receiving minimum acceptable price data from an operator. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 1, L 39-53. Picioccio does not explicitly disclose minimum acceptable price data. Official notice is taken that this price model is well known in the retail and microeconomic art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to use this price model to assure profitability or at least meeting the breakeven point.

CI 11, Picioccio discloses that the step of determining whether the monetary value is at least as great as the lowest minimum acceptable price, and the step of offering is performed only upon determining that the monetary value is at least as great as the lowest minimum acceptable price. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 1, L 44-53; col 5, L 20-24. Picioccio does not explicitly do any price comparison with lowest minimum acceptable price. However, official notice is taken that this form of price comparison is old and well known in the retail and microeconomic



art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to use this price markup to assure this vending machine operates as a profitable profit or breakeven center.

CI 12, Picioccio discloses that the step of determining includes providing a predetermined amount of time during which the consumer may refuse to accept the product. / Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and col 9, L 1-4. Picioccio does not explicitly disclose the time delay for optional refusal. However, Picioccio does disclose the component that may create a time delay , the PLC (col 9, L 1-4). Furthermore, official notice is taken that it is old and well known in the vending art for a customer to refuse to select and push the return change button. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to use a microcontroller or PLC to create a time delay feature for possible rejection of the product to allow more choices for the customer.

CI 16, Picioccio discloses a method for selling a product from a vending machine, the product identity being concealed at the time of offer, the method comprising:

- a. maintaining a database of product data, including normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 a
- b. receiving a first monetary value from a consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 2
- c. receiving a selection of a first product from the consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 c

d. retrieving a price of the first product from the database of product data; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 d

e. calculating a second monetary value, the second monetary value being the difference between the first monetary value and the price of the first product. / col 1, L 44-54; col 5, L 20-23

f. selecting a second product from among the plurality of products based on the second monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data; / col 1, L 24-28

Picioccio does not explicitly teach the option of selecting a second product from among the plurality of products based on the second monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data. However, official notice is taken that crediting "change" or refunds to the next payment is old and well known in the credit and debt payment (as in the income tax refund option to credit the refund to the next year tax liability) art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to use refunds for complementary purchases and thus to maximize sales.

g. outputting via an output device an offer of the second product to the consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 d

h. determining whether the consumer accepts the offer; and / refer to reasoning under claim 1 e

i. dispensing the product if the consumer accepts the product, thereby revealing the identity of the product to the consumer. / refer to reasoning under claim 1 f

CI 17, Picioccio discloses a method comprising:

calculating an additional amount, the additional amount being the difference between the second monetary value and the minimum acceptable price of the second product; and / Picioccio as applied to claim 16 and Picioccio again in col 1, L 44-53

prompting the consumer to supply funds at least equal to the additional amount. / Picioccio as applied to claim 16 and again in Picioccio in col 1, L 44-47. Picioccio does not explicitly teach "upsell" or the handling of change or refund from the vending machine. However, official notice is taken that upsell is old and well known in the retail art. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to utilize the upsell for a complementary product and thus to maximize sales.

CL 18, Picioccio discloses that the database includes complementary product data for each of the plurality of products and wherein the step of selecting is further based on the first product and the complementary product data for the first product. / Picioccio as applied to claim 16 and again in Picioccio: col 5, L 20-24. Picioccio does not teach complementary products. However, official notice is taken that complementary products are old and well known in the food retail industry. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to use complementary data for marketing feedback to determine the degree of correlation among various complementary pairs to increase sales.

CI 19, Picioccio discloses an automatic sales machine for selling a product, the product identity being concealed at the time of offer, the sales machine comprising:

- a. a processor; / Picioccio: col 5, L 20-26
- b. a memory connected to said processor storing a program to control the operation of said processor; / refer to reasoning directly above the processor operative with the program in the memory to:
  - c. maintain a database of product data, including normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 a.
  - d. identify a monetary value available for purchasing a product; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 b.
  - e. select a product from among the plurality of products based on the monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 c.
  - f. output via an output device an offer of the product to a consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 d.
  - g. determine whether the consumer accepts the offer; and / refer to reasoning under claim 1 e.
  - h. dispense the product if the consumer accepts the product, thereby revealing the identity of the product to the consumer. / refer to reasoning under claim 1 f.

CI 25, Picioccio discloses the processor is operative with the program in the memory to receive minimum acceptable price data from an operator. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 10

CI 26, Picioccio discloses the processor is operative with the program in the memory to determine whether the monetary value is at least as great as the lowest minimum acceptable price, and to offer the product performed only upon determining that the monetary value is at least as great as the lowest minimum acceptable price. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 11

CI 27, Picioccio discloses the processor is operative with the program in the memory to provide a predetermined amount of time during which the consumer may refuse to accept the product. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 12

CI 28, Picioccio discloses the database includes expiration data for each of the plurality of products and the processor is further operative with the program in the memory to select the product based on the expiration data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 13

CI 30, Picioccio discloses that the database includes demand data for each of the plurality of products and the processor is further operative with the program in the memory to select the product based on the demand data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 19 and refer to reasoning under claim 16

CI 31, Picioccio discloses an automatic sales machine for selling a product, the product identity being concealed at the time of offer, the sales machine comprising:

a processor; / refer to reasoning under claim 19 a.

a memory connected to said processor storing a program to control the operation of said processor; / refer to reasoning under claim 19 b.

Art Unit: 2165

the processor operative with the program in the memory to:

maintain a database of product data, including normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 a.

receive a first monetary value from a consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 b.

receive a selection of a first product from the consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 c.

retrieve a price of the first product from the database of product data; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 d.

calculate a second monetary value, the second monetary value being the difference between the first monetary value and the price of the first product / refer to reasoning under claim 16 e.

select a second product from among the plurality of products based on the second monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 f.

output via an output device an offer of the second product to the consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 g.

determine whether the consumer accepts the offer; and / refer to reasoning under claim 16 h.

dispense the product if the consumer accepts the product, thereby revealing the identity of the product to the consumer. / refer to reasoning under claim 16 i.

CL 32, Picioccio discloses the processor is operative with the program in the memory to:

calculate an additional amount, the additional amount being the difference between the second monetary value and the minimum acceptable price of the second product; and / Picioccio as applied to claim 31 and refer to reasoning under claim 17 prompt the consumer to supply funds at least equal to the additional amount. / Picioccio as applied to claim 31 and refer to reasoning under claim 17

CI 33, Picioccio discloses that the database further includes complementary product data for each of the plurality of products and the processor is operative with the program in the memory to select the product based on the initial product and the complementary product data for the initial product. / Picioccio as applied to claim 31 and refer to reasoning under claim 18

CI 34, Picioccio discloses an automatic sales machine for selling a product, the product identity being concealed at the time of offer, the sales machine comprising:

means for maintaining a database of product data, including normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 a.

means for identifying a monetary value available for purchasing a product; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 b.

means for selecting a product from among the plurality of products based on the monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 c.

means for outputting via an output device an offer of the product to a consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 d.

means for determining whether the consumer accepts the offer; and / refer to reasoning under claim 1 e.

means for dispensing the product if the consumer accepts the product, thereby revealing the identity of the product to the consumer. / refer to reasoning under claim 1 f.

CI 40, Picioccio discloses the means for identifying includes means for receiving minimum acceptable price data from an operator. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 10

CI 41, Picioccio discloses means for determining whether the monetary value is at least as great as the lowest minimum acceptable price, and wherein the means for offering is operative only upon determining that the monetary value is at least as great as the lowest minimum acceptable price. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 11

CI 42, Picioccio discloses the means for providing a predetermined amount of time during which the consumer may refuse to accept the product. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 12

CL 43, Picioccio discloses that the database includes expiration data for each of the plurality of products and the means for selecting operates based on the expiration data. / Picioccio as applied to claim 34 and refer to reasoning under claim 13



Art Unit: 2165

CI 46, Picioccio discloses an automatic sales machine for selling a product, the product identity being concealed at the time of offer, the sales machine comprising:

means for maintaining a database of product data, including normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 a.

means for receiving a first monetary value from a consumer; means for receiving a selection of a first product from the consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 b.

means for retrieving a price of the first product from the database of product data; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 c.

means for calculating a second monetary value, the second monetary value being the difference between the first monetary value and the price of the first product. / refer to reasoning under claim 16 d.

means for selecting a second product from among the plurality of products based on the second monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 e.

means for outputting via an output device an offer of the second product to the consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 f.

means for determining whether the consumer accepts the offer; and / refer to reasoning under claim 16 g.

means for dispensing the product if the consumer accepts the product, thereby revealing the identity of the product to the consumer. / refer to reasoning under claim 16 h.

CI 47, Picioccio discloses the means for calculating an additional amount, the additional amount being the difference between the monetary value and the minimum acceptable price of the second product; and means for prompting the consumer to supply funds at least equal to the additional amount. / Picioccio as applied to claim 46 and refer to reasoning under claim 17

CI 48, Picioccio discloses that the database includes complementary product data for each of the plurality of products and the means for selecting operates based on the initial product and the complementary product data for the initial product. / Picioccio as applied to claim 46 and refer to reasoning under claim 18

CI 49, Picioccio discloses a computer-readable storage medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method for selling a product from a vending machine, the product identity being concealed at the time of offer, the processing instructions for directing a computer to perform the steps of:

a. maintaining a database of product data, including normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 a.

b. identifying a monetary value available for purchasing a product; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 b.

c. selecting a product from among the plurality of products based on the monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 c.

d. offering the product to a consumer via an output device; / refer to reasoning under claim 1 d.

e. determining whether the consumer accepts the product; and / refer to reasoning under claim 1 e.

f. dispensing the product if the consumer accepts the product, thereby revealing the identity of the product to the consumer. / refer to reasoning under claim 1 f.

CI 50, Picioccio discloses a computer-readable storage medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method for selling a product from a vending machine, the product identity being concealed at the time of offer, the processing instructions for directing a computer to perform the steps of:

maintaining a database of product data, including normal price data and minimum acceptable price data for each of a plurality of products; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 a.

receiving a first monetary value from a consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 b.

receiving a selection of a first product from the consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 c.

retrieving a price of the first product from the database of product data; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 d.

calculating a second monetary value, the second monetary value being the difference between the first monetary value and the price of the first product. / refer to reasoning under claim 16 e.

selecting a second product from among the plurality of products based on the second monetary value and the minimum acceptable price data; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 f.

outputting via an output device an offer of the second product to the consumer; / refer to reasoning under claim 16 g:

determining whether the consumer accepts the offer; and / refer to reasoning under claim 16 h.

dispensing the product if the consumer accepts the product, thereby revealing the identity of the product to the consumer. / refer to reasoning under claim 16 i.

CL 51, Picioccio discloses a method for buying a product from a vending machine, the product identity being concealed at the time of purchase, the method comprising:

depositing a monetary value available for purchasing a product; / refer to reasoning under claim 49 b.

receiving an offer to purchase a product, the product having a concealed identity; / refer to reasoning under claim 49 d.

providing an indication of accepting the offer; and / refer to reasoning under claim 49 e.

receiving the product. / refer to reasoning under claim 49 f.

7. CI 13 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and in view of Koga (Japan: H9-198554).

Art Unit: 2165

Koga discloses that the database further includes expiration data for each of the plurality of products and the step of selecting is further based on the expiration data.

/ Picioccio as applied to claim 1 and Koga: page 1

### ***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure (et al's omitted):

"Data processing: PepsiCo." article teaches price flexibility

Maldanis teaches price modeling

Reuhl teaches price change

Konsmo teaches updating inventory

Wichter teaches inventory sensor

Center teaches complementary goods

Kovens teaches microprocessor control of vending machines

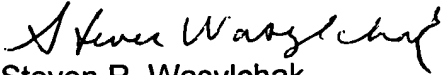
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven R. Wasylchak whose telephone number is (703) 308-2848. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon -Thur from 8:00am to 6:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin, can be reached at (703) 308-1065. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 305-0040.


Application/Control Number: 09/218085  
Art Unit: 2165

Page 21

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-5140.

  
Steven R. Wasylchak

Date: 11/3/00

  
VINCENT MILLIN  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100